

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-07 IO-10 /087 W

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R 040810Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2792

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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BEIRUT PLEASE PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR,SA,FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS SAUDI ARABIA

1. ON NOVEMBER 2 FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JEAN SAUVAGNARGUES COMPLETED A WELL-PUBLICIZED BUT LOW-KEY TWO DAY VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA. PRIOR TO THE VISIT THE FRENCH EMBASSY COUNSELOR HAD INFORMED THE DCM THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM ACHIEVED BY CROWN PRINCE FAHD'S JULY VISIT TO PARIS AND TO WORK OUT FURTHER DETAILS OF FRENCH-SAUDI ECONOMIC COOPERATION. BUT HE SAID THAT THE FRENCH WERE NOT PRESSING FOR ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR DURING THE VISIT. HE SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT THE GOF WAS NOT LOOKING FOR A LOAN.

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2. THE VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE FOLLOWED THIS PATTERN. AFTER AN INITIAL MEETING WITH FOM MIN PRINCE SAUD AL-FAISAL NOV 1 THE TWO MINISTERS CHAIRED THE OPENING MEETING OF THE FRENCH-SAUDI JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION WHICH HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN PRINCIPLE DURING THE VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA OF PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC EARLIER IN THE YEAR. ON NOV 2 SAUVAGNARGUES MET WITH KING KHALID IN RIYADH AND LATER THE SAME DAY DEPARTED FOR DAMASCUS.

3. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE SAUVAGNARGUES' DEPARTURE PRINCE SAUD DESCRIBED THE VISIT AS HAVING TAKEN PLACE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE JOINT ECONOMIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT THE JOINT COMMISSION HAD BEGUN ITS WORK AND WOULD EXAMINE VARIOUS AREAS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION. HE CONCLUDED THAT DISCUSSIONS DURING THE VISIT HAD TOUCHED ON VARIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS INCLUDING THE MIDDLE EAST AND PALESTINE AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN GENERAL AGREEMENT ON POSITIONS WITH ANY DIFFERENCES BEING OF SLIGHT IMPORTANCE. A JOINT PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED AFTER SAUVAGNARGUES' DEPARTURE WENT OVER MUCH OF THIS SAME GROUND ADDING THAT THE VIEWS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE VERY CLOSE WITH REGARD TO THE FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD CONTINUE TO COORDINATE THEIR POSITIONS.

4. COMMENT: SAUVAGNARGUES' VISIT DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE BROKEN ANY NEW GROUND AND TO HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO PROTOCOL MEETINGS (E.G. WITH THE KING) OR WORKING SESSIONS. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE HIS MEETINGS WERE CONFINED GENERALLY TO SECOND ECHELON FIGURES. THOUGH WE PRESUME LEBANON WAS DISCUSSED, THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION OF ANY JOINT DECISIONS FOR AN INITIATIVE AS HAD BEEN SUGGESTED MIGHT BE UNDER CONSIDERATION IN SAUVAGNARGUES' ARRIVAL STATEMENT. (SEE FBIS LONDON LD011125Y) WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANYTHING EMBASSY PARIS MIGHT TURN UP ON THE VISIT. AKINS

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